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SEIU 1199NE
Merideth Elco
Before the Human Services and
Aging Committees

In Support of **SB 989 An Act Concerning Nursing Homes**

Good Afternoon Senator Lesser, Senator Hochadel, Representative Gilcrest, Representative Garibay, and members of the Human Services and Aging Committees. My name is Merideth Elco, I live in South Windsor, and I work as an Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) at Kimberly Hall North in Windsor. I come before you today in support of SB 989 An Act Concerning Nursing Homes.

I love the work I do because of the relationships I am able to build with my coworkers and residents, and because of the fulfillment I feel knowing we are providing life affirming care for the residents in our home. My coworkers and I are incredibly dedicated to this work. Our residents are dependent on us for every aspect of their well being, and we take that responsibility very seriously. We care for our residents as if they are our own family, and through that care we build trusting relationships with our residents.

Within my role as an LPN, I provide total physical, emotional, and medical care to my residents. We are responsible for passing out medications, bathing residents, feeding residents, providing incontinent care, wound care, making appointments, and keeping in contact with residents' families. We make sure residents' living environment is safe. Making sure their rooms have proper working equipment like toilets, beds, sinks, and lights, and notifying the proper departments if we see an environmental issue. We ensure residents' have a proper diet, and monitor their vital signs and weights. The list of responsibilities of my coworkers goes on and on. This is challenging work and leaves us mentally and physically exhausted everyday.

Short staffing only makes our workload more unmanageable. The ratio of nurses and aides to residents is unsustainable, and we desperately need to address this. The residents are much more behavioral and much sicker than years ago. The acuity of our residents requires more nurses and time to properly care for them. More behavioral residents and insufficient staffing results in nurses being assaulted and residents without the one to ones they are supposed to have. The ratio of CNAs to residents is ridiculous, and we know the majority of direct care in nursing homes is provided by CNAs and LPNs! We are constantly being asked to do more with less.

If we had better staffing, it would benefit the residents' quality of care and overall safety. Better staffing would mean nurses and aides wouldn't be burnt out and exhausted at the end of every shift, which would help with retention. If you believe the current staffing levels are appropriate, I challenge you to live as a resident or work as a caregiver in a nursing home for a month! Passing SB 989 is the right thing to do for residents and workers, please support this bill.

Thank you.